Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph starting in the middle of page 10 and ending in the middle of page 11, which is located directly under the heading "RNA amplification", with the following rewritten paragraph:

Prior to the RNA amplification procedure, all RNA eluates are treated with RNeasy kit chemistry (Qiagen) to further clean the RNA from remnant salt or other substances that may inhibit the amplification efficiency. The volume of the aliquot is adjusted to 100 µl with RNase-free water. 350 µl buffer RLT is added and mixed thoroughly. 250 µl ethanol (96-100%) is added, and mixed thoroughly. The sample (700 µl) is applied to an RNeasy mini column, placed in a 2 ml collection tube. After a 15 second centrifugation step at more than 10,000 rpm, the flow-through is discarded. The RNeasy column is transferred into a new 2 ml collection tube. 500 µl buffer RPE is pipetted onto the column, the tube closed and centrifuged for 15 seconds at more than 10,000 rpm to wash the column. The flow-through is discarded. Another 500 µl buffer RPE is added to the column and the tube is centrifuged for 2 minutes at more than 10,000 rpm to dry the silica-gel membrane. To elute, the RNeasy column is transferred to a new 1,5 ml collection tube and 30 µl RNase-free water is added directly onto the membrane. After 1 minute incubation, the tube is centrifuged for 1 minute at more than 10,000 rpm to elute. This elution step is repeated once to get a total elution volume of 60 µl. The RNA is quantified by the Ribogreen method (Molecular Probes, Inc, USA). About 10 ng total RNA of each sample is used in three rounds of RNA amplification. All enzymes and buffers for the amplification procedure are purchased from Invitrogen, Inc. (Carlsbad, CA, USA) unless explicitly mentioned. 10ml total RNA are incubated with 10 pmol T7-polydT primer [5'-GGCCAGTGAATTGTAATACGACTCACTATAGGGAGGCGG$(T)_{24}$] SEQ ID.:1 (Genset, Inc.) in a volume of 11µl at 70°C for 10 minutes, then at 42°C for 5 minutes. The first strand reaction is carried out in a volume of 20µl by the addition of 200 units SuperScript II in the presence of first strand buffer, 10 mM DTT, 0.5 mM dNTP mixture, and 1µl RNase inhibitor (Ambion, Inc.) with a 42°C-incubation for 1hr. The second strand synthesis is performed in 150 µl with 40 units E.coli DNA polymerase I in 1x second strand buffer, 0.2 mM dNTPs, 10 units E.coli DNA ligase and 2 units RNaseH. After a 2-hour incubation at 16°C, the double-stranded DNA is blunt-ended by the addition of 8 units T4 DNA polymerase for 10 minutes at 16°C. The double-stranded DNA product is purified with a QIAquick PCR purification kit (Qiagen) and eluted in 50 µl elution buffer. For only one round of amplification the volume of the eluate is reduced to dryness under vacuum, resuspended in 22 µl nuclease-free water, and then used in the RNA labelling reaction as described below. For additional rounds of amplification, the eluate is reduced to dryness under vacuum, resuspended in 8 µl nuclease-free water, and subjected to an in-vitro transcription reaction with the Ambion MEGAscript kit, following the manufacturer's instructions

for a 20 µl reaction volume. After a 3-hour incubation at 37°C the RNA is purified with the RNeasy kit system (Qiagen). The RNA is eluted in 30 µl RNase free water, reduced to dryness under vacuum and resuspended in 11 µl nuclease-free water.

Please replace the paragraph on page 22, which starts with "Table 4:...", with the following rewritten paragraph:

Table 4: Sequences and labels of all probes and primers used in TaqMan™ assays. The sequences in this table listed from top to bottom correspond sequentially to SEQ. ID. Nos. 2-28.

GenBank accession #	Name	Sequence
X07696	KRT15	5'-GGCTTTGCATGCGCTCTATT-3' 5'-GCTGCATCTCCTTGCTCCA-3' 5'-FAM-CCCCTCTGCCTCTCCCCACCTTC-TAMRA-3'
M16937	HoxB7	5'-GGAGCCCCAAAACCTACCA-3' 5'-AAGCAAGAAGCAGCAGCCA-3' 5'-FAM-TCGCGTGTTCCCCAAGCGC-TAMRA-5'
AF040708	NPR2	5'-TGGGAGTTACCTGAGGGAAGC-3' 5'-GATTGGCAGTGCCCCATG-3' 5'-FAM-AGACCCTTTATGTCTCTCAGGAGCCCTGGA-TAMRA-3'
U41635	OS9	5'-GCAAGGAGGGCAGGACACT-3' 5'-CAAACATCACTAAGGGCAGGTG-3' 5'-FAM-CAGGCACTGAGCAAGCAGGCCC-TAMRA-3'
AB010414	G-protein γ 7	5'-TGGCCTTCTCAGTTTGGGC-3' 5'-TTCAGTTATTCCGAACGGGAA-3' 5'-FAM-AAAGGGATGGAGGCTTTACGGCCA-TAMRA-3'
U79251	OBCML	5'-CTGAGCCACCTTTGCTGTCTT-3' 5'-TTTGAATCCCAGGCAACTTTG-3' 5'-FAM-TCTCCTGGGACGAGAAGGACTCATCCA-TAMRA-3'
AL049449	DKFZp586B1722	5'-AACTTGCCAATTCTGTGAATGTTATT-3' 5'-GGGACATGTTACCCAATCACAA-3' 5'-FAM-ATTTAAAAAGCTGGGTCTGTAATGGGAGGCATT-TAMRA-3'
AJ005814	HoxA7	5'-TGGAAATTCTGCTCACTTCTTGC-3' 5-TCTGATGTCATGGCCAAATTTG-3' 5'-FAM-CTTGCTTGCTTCTCTGGTGGGCTTCC-TAMRA-3'
M31661	PRLR	5'-GACACTACTAAAGCTCCCAGCTCC-3' 5'-TTCTGGAATCAGCTGCTGGA-3' 5'-FAM-TTCATGCTCCATTTTTAACCACTTGCCTCTT-TAMRA-3'

A copy of the abstract is herein provided on the following separate sheet.